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PHANTOM OF ROCH ERA PG 4



MAD MIND DOCTOR PG 22



HORROR ON THE WALL PG 38

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RAG OF THE BASKET PG 29



A LIVING DEATH PG 46



SATAN'S COFFIN PG 72

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# PHANTOM OF THE ROCK ERA

THIS EVENING STAR THEY KNEW WOULD SOON ECLIPSE ALL OTHER ROCK SUPER-STARS. HE WAS MAMMOTH - AN ANIMAL FURY MATCHED WITH A compelling AURA OF EVIL AND SELF-DESTRUCTION AND AN ANTI-SEXUALITY WHICH HIP GIRLS FOUND ALLURING.

THE CROWD AT COWBOY BOB'S BAR AND DISCO STARES ON JOYFULLY AGAINST I - WITH SHINING PHANTOMION I, THE DEBUT OF A NEW ROCK TALENT... A PERSONALITY TO MESMERIZE THEM WITH HIS SWIFT, WAILING VOICE, HAUNTING LYRICS, POSSESSED MOVEMENTS...



HIS MUSIC FRENZIED THEM... SET THEM WILD! EACH GIRL SPINATED AS IF BEING HELD BY A DEMON... LOST IN GROTESQUE ECSTASY, ALL, BUT ONE...



HMM... JUST VOLKEL CHICKS... NO GROUPIES IN SIGHT!

THE RUBES HERE IN JUNIOR CITY, TEXAS AREN'T REALLY HIP TO THIS GUY YET!



THIS GUY WILL BE RICH SOME DAY SOON, SURE THING!

BETTER DO A ZSA-ZSA, FIST,

AND LATCH ON TO HIM BEFORE SOMEONE ELSE DOES!



— AND COLLECT A FORTUNE IN ALIMONY WHEN HE'S FAMOUS!

THE RENT-A-COP TOLD ME HE'S HIS OWN MANAGER SO, OPEN SEASON!

THE DRESSING ROOM WAS CRAMPED AND MUSTY, WITH A SHRIEK OF SELF-PITY THE EXOTIC FIGURE TURNED TO HER ...

RODDY SKEANE?

I JUST SAW YOUR PERP! HEAVY!

YOU WERE JUST...

WHAT DO YOU WANT, LITTLE GIRL, MY MONEY OR MY LIFE?

HE'S ON TO ME!  
SLOW AND EASY  
NOW... PLAY  
"HURT..."

I... I DON'T KNOW  
ABOUT YOUR  
SENSE OF  
HUMOR...

Y... YOU DON'T  
WANT ME HERE?

WAIT! DON'T GO!  
I'M SORRY FOR BEING RUDE!

THE  
"PATSY THE  
POOR MONSTER"  
BIT... SUCH  
CLICHÉ!

HIS EYES! SO  
READ, DARK...  
DISTANT... AS  
IF...

I'VE BEEN  
WAITING SO LONG  
FOR SOMEONE LIKE  
YOU TO WALK IN...

A GNARLED, SKEL-  
ETAL HAND REACHED  
FORTH AND BEGAN  
TO STROKE LALA'S  
HAIR, SLOWLY, DE-  
LIBERATELY...

HIS SKIN...  
SO PALE... SO  
TAINTED... AND  
ODOROUS... LIKE  
DEATH!

HE... HE'S  
HYPNOTIZING  
ME! I'M FALL-  
ING UNDER  
HIS SPELL!

YOU REALLY  
WANT ME? OF  
ALL PEOPLE, ME?

YEAH... I WANT  
SOMEONE AS SHY  
AND SPIRITUALLY  
BEAUTIFUL AS  
YOU...





THE BOYS IN THE DISPLAY DEPARTMENT WORKED ALL DAY ON THIS YESTERDAY... HERE'S THE LINEUP... RODDY SCREANE POSTERS, MODEL KITS, BALLOONS, BUBBLE GUM, CARDS & MONSTER COMIC BOOKS WITH YOU AS HOST...

YOU'LL BE A HIT ON BOTH SIDES OF THE GENERATION GAP!



HOW DOES A FACE WHICH LOOKS LIKE A SKULL REGISTER HEARTBREAK... SHAME... ENTHRALLED DISAPPOINTMENT?!

MONSTER MASKS, RUBBER HANDS, SKULL CANDY...

I... I ALREADY HAVE MY OWN GROUP, MR. SMITH...

WELL, WE'LL MEET AGAIN NEXT WEEK WITH YOUR, UH... FRIENDS...

LATER, MR. SMITH!



THEY WALKED PAST FILES OF SAN FRANCISCO'S 'GINGERBREAD' HOUSES, A POUTING GIRL AND A SHATTERED SKELETON-WAN...

I THINK HIS IDEAS WILL MAKE YOU RICH RODDY!

YES, BUT BY ADVERTISING MY BUSINESS?

YOU'RE NOT REALLY UGLY RODDY...

THIS IS WHERE MY GROUP LIVES, LALA!

A MAUSOLEUM?

WHAT A SWINNICK!



NO... YOU'RE UGLY IN AN UNREAL WAY...



WE CAN EVEN GET A GROUP FOR YOU!

A WEREWOLF WITH SIDEBURNS!

LET ME HANDLE THIS A DAY-OLD VAMPIRE!

AND YOU'LL MAKE A FORTUNE.







WHAT COULD BE MORE DELIGHTFUL FOR CITIFIED NEWLYWEDS THAN A SUN-DRENCHED, CLEAN-AIR HOLIDAY IN THE GOLDEN WEST? MORE COLORFUL THAN AN OLD INDIAN LEGEND OF LOST LANDS AND LOST SOULS? MORE PICTURESQUE THAN A SOLITARY RIDE INTO THE PAINTED DESERT? HOW COULD A BEAUTIFUL BRIDE'S QUEST FOR ROMANCE BECOME A TRAIL WINDING INTO THE REALM OF SUPERNATURAL TERROR, UNBRIDLED LUST AND MONSTROUS GREED? HOW COULD WHAT STARTED AS A PERFECT HONEYMOON BE CONSUMMATED AS A BORING...

# SHOOT-DUT AT SATAN'S COFFEE

KEITH-- THOSE GHASTLY FIGURES MATERIALIZING AT THE POKER TABLE! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! WE'VE WANDERED INTO SOMEBODY ELSE'S NIGHTMARE!

WE'VE WANDERED INTO A REAL G-GHOST TOWN, HOLLY! IF ONLY YOU HAD STAYED AT THE DUDE RANCH AS I TOLD YOU...

PLEASE DON'T SCOLD, DARLING. EVEN THEY ARE NOT AS DREADFUL AS THE EVIL THAT STILL PURSUES US.

ONE OF YOUSE MUGS IS A CHEATIN' RENEGADE! I AIN'T WON A POT ALL YEAR!

THEY CALL THAT "DEAD MAN'S HAND." PRETTY GOOD.

ACES AND EIGHTS, HATCHET.

I CALL SUNDANCE! WHAT'RE YOU HOLDING?

HONKY MATAM, YOU'RE THE FURTIEST SQUAW THIS COWPOKE EVER LAID EYES ON.

THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER FINISH DRESSING. LET'S ORDER BREAKFAST. I'M FAMISHED.

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT THAT OLD INDIAN WAITRESS AGAIN.

I THINK SHE'S VERY PICTURESQUE.





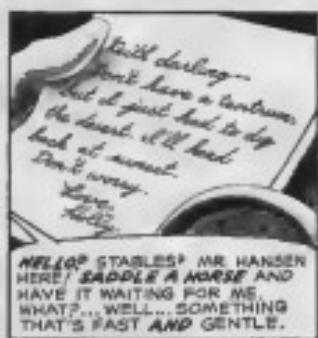


THUNDERBIRD IS MOTHER SYMBOL TO  
MY PEOPLE. PROTECTS HER YOUNG.  
WHEN IN DANGER TWIRL AMULET  
AND SAY MAGIC WORDS 'WAWAWA-  
WAH GAWAWA-WAH.'



DON'T TELL MY HUSBAND, BUT  
I WANT IT HOW MUCH, PRINCESS?

NOT FOR SALE. ONLY  
GOOD CAN BUY GOOD.  
IF YOU MUST VISIT  
LAND OF THE LOST,  
I MAKE YOU GIFT. YOU  
REPAY BY GOOD DEED  
OF OWN TO OTHERS.





APPEARS LIKE OUR WATCH-DOG, REX, CAUGHT HIMSELF A MINER TRYING TO ESCAPE.

OH, GOD-- IT'S A MONSTER!  
A PREHISTORIC MONSTER!

YE GODS! THOSE  
MINERS ARE NO  
BEAUTIES EITHER!

THE POOR SOULS ARE  
RADITION MUTANTERS  
THEY MUST BE THE  
LOST PEOPLE PRINCESS  
MOONBEAM SPOKE OF!

REX WAS JUST A LITTLE OLD  
GILA MONSTER LIZARD LIKE  
THOUSANDS IN THE DESERT  
MEN WE MADE HIM A PET THE  
YOU-RADIUM RADIATION MADE  
HIM GROW. IT DOES OTHER  
THINGS TO FOLKS. THAT'S WHY  
SETH AND ME DON'T GO BEYOND  
THE BARBED WIRE. OUR MINERS,  
PILE THE DAY'S TAKE IN THESE  
LEAD CASES. WE TAKE IT FROM  
THAR' NAW!



I GOTTA CHOICE  
DUDE. WORK THE  
MINES LIKE THE  
OTHERS, OR BE  
REX BREAKFAST.

YOU FRIENDS.

KEITH, ARE  
THEY ASLEEP?  
FROM THEIR  
SHORES I  
COMPUTE THAT  
THEY ARE, WHY?

DON'T TEASE,  
DARLING. I KNOW  
YOU'VE BEEN RIDING  
YOUR TIME. I, TOO,  
NOTICED THAT THEY  
FAILED TO CONFISCATE  
YOUR SAWZ.

SR. YES, I WAS JUST GOING  
TO SUGGEST WE SAW THE  
ROPES AGAINST THE  
ROWELS OF MY SPURS.



SETH!  
THEY'RE  
GETTIN'  
AWAY!

SWEET, HOLLY!  
UP BEHIND ME!  
GIDDYAP!



DON'T WASTE  
AMMO, HANK...



...THEY ONLY GOT ONE TIRED  
HOSS AND NO WATER. WE'LL  
GIT SOME SHUTEYE AND OVER-  
TAKE 'EM BY NOON TOMORROW.







YOU'NS KIN GIT UP NOW MA'AM.  
THOSE SIDEWINDERS ARE  
GONE, AND WE DON'T AIM  
TO HARM YOU.

TIS WE WHO MUST THANK YOU, MADAME  
IN LIFE WE WERE WICKED MEN. OUR  
SOULS WERE DOOMED TO REMAIN IN  
SATAN'S COFFIN UNTIL WE PERFORMED  
A DEED THAT WOULD REDEEM US. THOSE  
VERMIN WILL BE TAKING OUR PLACE NOW.  
YOU'VE ENABLED US TO GO TO ETERNAL  
REST. THANK YOU AND FAREWELL.



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT  
KEITH! IT ALL SEEKS  
LIKE A DREAM!

WE'LL KNOW WHETHER WE DREAMED IT  
WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE MINE. YOU  
GOT ANY IDEA WHAT THOSE DIGGINGS  
ARE WORTH?

A LOT. I GUESS  
THOSE POOR SEALS

A LOT MORE THAN  
\$15,000 A YEAR!

IT WAS NO DREAM, BABY! ATTACCO  
REX, KEEP 'EM HOPPIN'! HEY YOU  
MEATHADED MUTANTS, GET A  
MOVE ON! FROM NOW ON WE'RE  
DOUBLING THE DAILY QUOTA!

KEITH! WHAT  
ARE YOU SAYING!!

WE'RE TAKING OVER, HOLLY  
RICH! YACHTS, JEWELS,  
SERVANTS! I CAN HANDLE  
REX AS WELL AS THOSE BIRD  
SCOURDOUGHS - AS LONG AS  
HE DOESN'T GO HUNGRY!

THERE THE SLAVES  
ARE ALL EATEN.  
WE'LL HAVE MORE  
THAN WE CAN  
EVER SPEND!

MAD! I WON'T LET YOU! YOU'VE GONE  
MAD, KEITH. ALL I WANT IS MY LOVABLE  
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER BACK! I DON'T  
NEED WEALTH!

HOLLY, COME BACK!  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING,  
YOU FOOL?

I'M FREEING THE  
SLAVES! COME, YOU  
POOR SOULS. WHEN  
I PULL THE FENCE  
DOWN, RUN!



POWER DOES CORRUPT, AND ABSOLUTE POWER DOES CORRUPT ABSOLUTELY. EVERYONE KNOWS THIS. STILL, WE WHO TURN OUR MIGHTY CITIES INTO LABYRINTHS OF PRIVILEGE AND DARKNESS SOMETIMES GIVE OVER THE POWER OF OUR MINDS TO FIRST MADNESS, AND THEN TO...

# THE MAD MIND DOCTOR!



THE METOPICAL TIP-TAPPING OF THE RECEPTIONISTS ELECTRICAL TYPEWRITER CEASED AS THE INNER OFFICE DOOR CREAKED...

I AM NOT A PSYCHOPATH.  
I AM NOT A PSYCHOPATH.  
I--

VERY GOOD,  
MRS. MORTON!  
WE'LL SEE  
EACH OTHER  
IN ONE  
WEEK.

UH-HA! MORTON, WAIT A MOMENT... THAT WILL BE FIFTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR THE HOUR...

YOU CAN VISIT  
DR. STREICHMAN,  
NOW, MR. KAENE...

YES, WE  
ALWAYS  
ACCEPT  
CHECKS...

UH, GO  
RIGHT IN,  
MR. KAENE...

OH, DID  
I HURT YOUR  
HAND, MR. KAENE?

UH, WELL, YOU  
CAME TO BE  
TREATED IN MY  
FAMOUS  
STREICHMAN  
THERAPY--

HAVE A SEAT...  
WHAT IS YOUR  
PROBLEM...

MY PROBLEM, DOCTOR--  
IS THAT MORE AND MORE  
OFTEN... PARTICULARLY  
WHEN THE MOON IS OUT--

I FEEL A CHANGE  
COME OVER ME...  
AS IF MY SOUL  
DIED... AS IF...

I FEEL I'M  
TURNING SLOWLY  
INTO A  
WEREWOLF...

A WHAT?!

A-A WEE-WEE-WEREWOLF!!

YOU ARE NOT A  
WEREWOLF! YOU  
HEAR ME--!

NOT A  
WEREWOLF

UHNG!

OUUFF!!

YOU ARE JUST A SMALL MAN TRYING TO COMPENSATE FOR YOUR FAULT! YOU'RE NOT A WEREWOLF SO YOU FANTASIZE YOURSELF TO BE A MIGHTY MONSTER!

THIS WEREWOLF FANTASY OF YOURS IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL SIN!

AAGH!! AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SINS MUST BE PUNISHED!!

THAT IS WHY MY THERAPY IS NECESSARILY SO EXTREME!



COARDS FEAR THE VERY NAME, "STREICIAN THERAPY!"

FOR THEY FEAR THE PUNISHMENT THEY SO MUCH DESERVE!

YOU WERE WISE IN COMING TO ME SO SOON!



YOU MUST COME BACK NEXT MONDAY FOR ANOTHER SESSION!!!

REMEMBER, MR. KAINEN--YOU ARE NOT A WEREWOLF! YOU ARE NOT A WEREWOLF!

YES...MISS, MR. KAENE...

T-THANK YOU!



AH YES, MISS DARGOSI...

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO THINKS SHE MIGHT BE A VAMPIRE--

Y-YES--

MISS DARGOSI, YOU ARE WRONG!

VAMPIRES CAST NO REFLECTION!

SEE YOUR REFLECTIONS MIRRORED A THOUSAND TIMES!

YOU ARE NOT A VAMPIRE! YOU ARE NOT A VAMPIRE!



AND LOOK! YOU ARE NOT BLEED! VAMPIRES CANNOT BLEED!



SEE! YOUR TEETH ARE NORMAL! YOU HAVE NO FANGS -- YOU ARE NOT A VAMPIRE!



AND THIS IS FOR GOOD MEASURE! IF YOU'D STOP HATING AND TRYING TO HURT ME, YOU'D STOP IMAGINING YOU'RE A VAMPIRE!



FOR ONLY I AND NO ONE ELSE CAN CURE YOU NEXT WEEK, THEN...

LEAVE YOUR CHECK WITH RECEPTIONIST ON YOUR WAY OUT. SHE WILL APPLY SOME FIRST AID...



A YOUNG MAN STARBS UNBELIEVINGLY AT THE SIGHT BEFORE HIM. ANSER HARDENS HIS STEEL-BLUE EYES.



DON'T TRY TO STAB ME DOWN, DR. MORAL. IT CAN'T BE DONE...

SUDDENLY MY YOUNG COLLEAGUE FROM ACROSS THE HALL SCRUTINIZES ME --



DR. STRICKMAN -- I KNOW YOU ARE WORLD-KNOWN AND HIGHLY RESPECTED. BY OTHER BRANCHES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY THAN YOUR OWN...

AND I REALIZE MY PRACTICE IS ONLY STARTED...

YET I FEEL MOVED TO REGRETFULLY INFORM YOU THAT IN MY PROFESSIONAL OPINION YOUR VIOLENT PHYSICAL THERAPY HAS OVERSTEPPED ITS BOUNDARIES!

WORSE! IT HAS DEGENERATED TO SADISM!... IT IS BRUTISH -- THROWN BACK-INTO!

I INTEND TO TAKE WHAT I SAW TODAY TO THE MEDICAL ETHICS COMMITTEE!

BEST BEFORE ADVERSE REACTIONS SET IN WITH YOUR PATIENTS!



HELLO,  
FRANK? DOLPH--  
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU,  
MEETING WITH THE ETHICS  
COMMITTEE, BUT--

THE MORAN KID THINKS HE  
CAN TAKE ME UP TO YOUR  
BOARD OF REVIEW--

YES, I'LL  
PUT HIM  
ON!

SIR, I  
HAPPEN--  
OH! BUT--  
YES, I  
REALIZE  
DR. STREICH--  
BUT--

TRUE, MY  
RESIDENCY  
IS ONLY  
TEMPORARY,  
BUT--  
YOU CAN'T SIMPLY  
REDOE MY PRACTICE  
TO AN OBSCURE  
HOSPITAL IN THE  
STICKS!

BUT-- IF YOU'D  
ONLY RECOMMEND--  
SIR PLEASE--

MY GOD! I NEVER  
CONSIDERED THE  
POWER YOU WOULD  
ANSWER ME THIS!

HOW MANY  
OTHERS HAVE  
BEEN FORCED  
TO REMOVE TO  
COTTER AREAS  
BECAUSE YOU  
HAVE FRIENDS IN  
HIGH POSITIONS  
IN THE  
PROFESSION--

BUT YOUR LOFTY FRIENDS DON'T  
EASILY SCARE ME, STREICHMAN!

THINK SO,  
MORAN?

I'LL GET EVEN,  
SOME DAY! REST  
ASSURED SOME DAY  
I'LL GET EVEN!

NO, YOU  
WON'T,  
MORAN!

YOU WILL  
NOT GET  
EVEN!

YOU WILL NOT  
GET EVEN!  
YOU WILL NOT  
GET EVEN!  
YOU WILL NOT  
GET EVEN!

NOT GET--  
WHAA--?  
HE'S DEAD!!

OUNGH!

GLAD THE RECEPTIONIST ALREADY WENT HOME--I'VE INVOLVED HER IN TOO MANY MURDERS, LATELY... THE MOODLIMS CHARGE TOO MUCH THESE DAYS... IT'S CHEAPER TO DO THE DIRTY WORK MYSELF...



THE NEXT NIGHT FOUND DR. ADOLPH STREICHMAN AFTER OFFICE HOURS...

GOOD THING THIS CONSCIENCE OF MINE--

EACH TIME I KILL SOMEONE, I STUDY MY PATHOLOGY BOOKS THAT MUCH HARDER!



THE POLICE? NO-- PROBABLY JUST THE CLEANING MAN...

QUIT POUNDING. I'M COMING!

HOLD ON A MINUTE!



HAAGNE DOCTOR ADOLPH STREICHMAN!

GRA-AH-AAHSH! HOOOM, E DOCTOR STREICHMAN!

HEEE! HEEE! HEE!



I AM NOT A VAMPIRE! I AM NOT A VAMPIRE!

I WILL NOT GET EVEN! I WILL NOT GET EVEN!

I AM NOT A PSYCHOPATH! I AM NOT A PSYCHOPATH!



AS DARKNESS PERVERSES THE STREAMLINED CANDEAS OF THE GREAT CITY, DR. ADOLPH STREICHMAN LEARNS THE TERRIFYING LESSON THAT HIS THERAPIES BACKFIRED--THAT PATIENTS FROM SHEER FORCE OF VENGEANCE IMBEDDED DEEP IN THEIR HEARTS CAN BECOME THAT WHICH THEY FEAR MOST--THE INCREDIBLE MONSTERS HE TOLD THEM THEY WERE NOT!

The end

I AM NOT A WEREWOLF! I AM NOT A WEREWOLF!

# A NIGHTMARE PIN-UP #3

THIS UNUSUAL TREATMENT  
OF A BEAUTIFULLY DONE  
NIGHTMARE MASTERPIECE WAS  
DONE BY THE MASTER... BILL EVERETT



DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH IS THE FRENCH INFERNAL ASYLUM KNOWN AS... **HELL**! ETERNALLY MAN HAS LIVED IN FEAR, OF PUNISHMENT...THAT HIS SOUL MAY BE CAST INTO EVERLASTING TORMENT...AND ODDUS PANDEMONTIUM! OUR TRUE TAKE YOU ON A PERSONALLY GUIDED TOUR OF GROTTO OF **HELL** ITSELF...FROM WHICH NONE HAVE EVER RETURNED... SAW FOR ONE...THE...

# HAG OF THE BLOOD BASKET!

FRANCE, THE YEAR 1795...IN THE MIDST OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION...ONE OF THE GAULDEST BLOODBATHS IN HISTORY. A REVOLUTION OF THE "PEOPLE" WHERE PREJUDICE HAS ITS REVENGE IN KIND...WHERE MEN, WOMEN AND EVEN CHILDREN OF NOBLE BIRTH, ARE PRAGGED IN RICKETY, LUMBERING CARTS AFTER A MOCK TRIAL, TO THEIR DEATHS AT THE BLACK HAND OF THE MERCLESS... **GUILLOTINE**!

THE **GUILLOTINE**...GLEAMING IN THE BLOOD DRENCHED STREETS OF PARIS, ROLL THE WRETCHED HEADS OF ITS OFT-INNOCENT VICTIMS, WIMPLESS, HEADLESS BUT ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS...OFTEN THE GHASTLY DISFIGURED HEADS ROLL INTO A CRIMSON RECEPTACLE... **THE BLOODY HEAD-BASKET**!





IN THAT TIME OF PERSONAL VENDETTA... WHEN MEN USED THE REVOLUTION TO KILL THEIR PERSONAL ENEMIES STARTS OUR TALE... AN OLD WOMAN IS FALSELY ACCUSED OF BEING A ROYALIST... IN REALITY SHE WAS BUT A SIMPLE PEASANT... THE WOMAN WHO HELD THE BLOOD BASKET!



SO YOU HAVE NOTHING OF VALUE TO SAY... BUT FALSE AND CRUEL ACCUSATIONS AGAINST OUR GOOD CITIZENS!

THE VERDICT... GUILTY OF TREASON  
YOU OLD TOAD HANG! I SENTENCE YOU TO DEATH! MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR WRETCHED SOUL WOMAN!

CERTAINLY NO MERCY FROM A COURT WITH POWER, DEVOID OF SANITY... AND SHE IS CONDEMNED TO BE TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DAY TO THE WAITING CLUTCHES OF THE GUILLOTTINE... MERCILESS AND CRUEL, UNHEARING AND UNCARING... A HIDEOUS LAMPIONER OF JUSTICE!

THE EXECUTIONER STANDS BEFORE THE CROWDS OF JEERING PEASANTS HAND GRASPING TAUGHT THE ROPE THAT HOLDS READY THE BLADE... THE COAQUERLING STEEL SHAFT THAT SEVERS ANY MAN'S LIFE!

THE CROWDS LEAR AT THE CONVICTED WHO LUMBER TO THE PLATFORM, FROM BLOOD-DRENCHED CARTS... CRY SHOUTS OF INSULT AND SING SONGS OF FREEDOM... DELIRIOUS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MACABRE SLAUGHTER THAT AWAITS THEM!



FATE SUSPENDS OMINOUSLY ABOVE AS THE OLD TOAD HAS WHIMPERED IN DESPAIR... LEES GROW WEAK... HER EYES LONG SOAKED WITH TEARS OF AGONY--ROLL, HAGGARD IN THEIR SOCKETS! AS SHE NOW FACES THE ETERNITY OF DAMNATION.



THE BLADE DROPS SUDDENLY...  
CUTTING THE EAR-PIERCING  
SCREAMS OF THE WRETCHED  
OLD WOMAN SPITTING HORRIBLE  
OBSCENITIES AT THOSE JEERING  
MANY WHO CONDEMNED HER TO  
DEATH. IN BUT A MOMENT THE  
UNCOMMON FRENZY IS OVER. THE  
HEAD ROLLS. EYES POPPING  
FROM THEIR SOCKETTS...AND THE  
GROTESQUE CARAPACE WITH  
BLOOD-SODDEN COBBLESTONE!!  
THE TOAD HAS LIES DEAD AND  
DECAPITATED. THE CROWD IS  
HUSHED IN A MOMENT OF PRE-  
CLIMACTIC REFLECTION...



BUT DEATH COMES NOT EASILY. HER EYES REMAIN OPEN EVEN AS SHE LIES HELPLESS IN PASSIVE AGONY AS THE FEET OF HER MURDERERS PASS HER BY...

SHE WATCHES IN TORTURE AS HER NOW LIMP AND LIFELESS FORM IS TOSSSED LIKE GARBAGE FROM THE THRONE OF DEATH...AND WONDERS...FONDERS WHY THERE IS NOT THE NOTHINGNESS OF DEATH SHE EXPECTED...BUT AWARE AFTER DEATH...THAT PERMITS HER TO SEE, TO HEAR, TO WONDER!



MISERY AND SHOCK  
MINGLE TOGETHER,  
IN THE TOAD HAG'S  
MIND...THE BODY  
(THAT WAS ONCE  
HERS) SHUDDERS AND  
GRODES FORWARD  
SEARCHING...SEARCHING  
FOR A HEAD, A  
MIND THAT THINKS,  
EYES THAT CAN SEE!  
THE HANDS FIND  
THEIR TARGET...AND  
PULL THE TEAR-  
PULSING HEAD BACK...  
BACK TO THE  
SHOULDERS WHERE IT  
ROVETS ITSELF  
MIRACULOUSLY...AND  
THE MESE THAT WAS  
LIVING DEATH NOW  
BECOMES...IS ONE  
IN FORM...AND  
IN LIFE!



WHAT GRIM IMPOSSIBILITY  
IS THIS...I AM ALIVE  
YET NO ONE SEES ME...NO  
ONE PAYS ANY ATTENTION  
THEY LOOK TO THE  
GUILLOTINE FOR THE  
NEXT DEATH!





AND SOON YOU SHALL KNOW  
WRETCHED OLD HAG, AS  
YOU BEGIN YOUR DESCENT...  
YOU SINK INTO THE VERY  
GROUND ITSELF, YOU GRASP  
FOR SUPPORT CLUTCHING  
NOTHING BUT AIR...MEANING-  
LESS AIR...AND STILL YOU  
SINK...DOWN...DOWN...INTO  
THE VERY BOWELS OF THE  
EARTH!



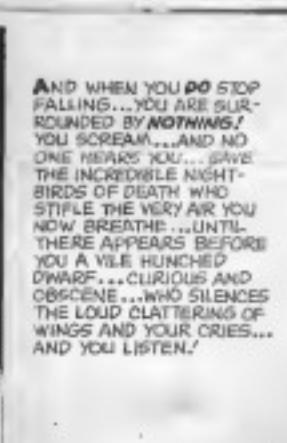
THE EARTH WELCOMES YOU,  
CUSHIONS YOUR DESCENT  
AND CARESSES YOUR DILAY-  
ING BODY IN MOCKERY,  
YOU ARE CHOKING...AND  
SUFFER...AND CLUTCH  
YOUR THROAT PLEADING  
FOR AIR...FOR YOU CANNOT  
BREATHE...AND YET YOU  
CANNOT DIE!



AND WHERE THE GROUND  
AND EARTH END...DEEP WITHIN  
THE WORLD'S VERY CORE...  
YOU FALL THROUGH THE  
NOTHINNESS THAT SURROUNDS  
YOU. GREAT MONSTROUS BATS  
HOVER ABOUT AND, RUDELY  
AWAKENED FROM THEIR  
SLEEP OF AGES CRASH BLINDLY  
ABOUT YOUR HELPLESS FORM  
NOW BATTERED AND BRUISED...



HADARUS WELCOMES  
YOU...MADAM! I  
TRUST YOUR TRIP HAS  
BEEN AS UNCOM-  
FORTABLE AS WE  
INTENDED IT BE!  
I AM VOGT...  
EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT  
TO HIS  
MAJESTY SATANAS!  
THIS MADAM...  
AS YOU MIGHT  
HAVE PRESUMED...  
IS HELL!



AND WHEN YOU DO STOP  
FALLING...YOU ARE SUR-  
ROUNDED BY NOTHINNESS!  
YOU SCREAM...AND NO  
ONE HEARS YOU...GIVE  
THE INCREDIBLE NIGHT-  
BIRDS OF DEATH WHO  
STIFLE THE VERY AIR YOU  
NOW BREATHE...UNTIL  
THERE APPEARS BEFORE  
YOU A VILE HUNCHED  
DWARF...CLURIOUS AND  
OBSCENE...WHO SILENCES  
THE LOUD CLATTERING OF  
WINGS AND YOUR CRIES...  
AND YOU LISTEN!





THE GROTTO OF HELL! GROTESQUE-HORRID--UNCANNY BEYOND MORTAL IMAGINATION... WHERE THE DEAD DWELL IN AN ETERNITY OF TORTURE AND AGONISH... WHERE FREEDOM IS BANISHED... WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL IS BUT LITERALLY A NUMBER ON A CAGE... WHERE SWAY RULES WITH AN IRON FIST!



THE GROTTO OF HELL! WHERE TIME STANDS STILL AND YET REACHES OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS... INTO THE DEEP AND MISTY AGES OF YESTERDAY... AND FAR INTO THE WAR-RIDDEN UNKNOWNNS OF TOMORROW! IT IS UNBEARABLE FOR A WOMAN SO OLD, SO FRAIL... SHE FEELS AGONY IN THE LIFELESS HEART IN THE LIFELESS SPIRITUAL BODY! YET SHE CAN SAY NOTHING... DO NOTHING HERE... LESS IT BE SANCTIONED BY THE DEVIL HIMSELF!



BUT WAIT! THERE ARE NO PEOPLE... NO PEOPLE! WHERE CAN THEY BE? IS THIS NOT A CITY... OR IS IT DIRECTLY WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE... SOME KIND OF INCREDIBLE CRYPT OF THE FORGOTTEN DEAD!

IN THE GRIME AND CAKED DUST OF HELL ITSELF SATAN HIMSELF IS UNSEEN... YET HE IS ALWAYS PRESENT, ALWAYS ON THE LIPS OF EVERY DESPERATE SOUL WHO INHABITS THIS HIVE OF DAMNATION! HE IS SERVED BY MANY ASSISTANTS WHO CONTEMPTABLE EVEN TO THEIR OWN KIND! DIABOLICALLY DEFORMED DEVILISH ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE SWEORN THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO HATE... TERROR... DESPOTISM AND FEAR. THE TOAD HAG HAS ALREADY MET ONE SUCH GAUNT EXCUSE FOR HUMANITY--HE WHO IS CALLED... MOOT... NOW SHE MEETS ANOTHER... THE HAGGARD DRAKOS!



I'LL FOLLOW YOU NOWHERE UNTIL I FIND OUT MORE... UNTIL I HAVE AN EXPLANATION! WHAT IS THIS PLACE? WHERE ARE ALL THE PEOPLE... TELL ME... PLEASE TELL ME!

YOU WILL COME WITH ME WHETHER YOU WISH TO OR NOT!

THIS IS A SPIRITUAL WORLD...YOUR BODY, YOUR MIND, YOUR VERY BEING IS ENTIRELY SPIRITUAL! YOU SENSE THE SAME THINGS YOU DID IN LIFE!

BUT DO NOT FOOL YOURSELF! YOU ARE DEAD!

BUT YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED ME...WHERE...WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?

THEY ARE IN THEIR...SHALL WE SAY PRIVATE ROOMS? NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO VENTURE OUT!

BUT COME, YOUR TOUR IS ALMOST OVER UNTIL THE MASTER DECIDES TO SEE YOU AND HEAR YOUR CASE...YOU MUST JOIN THE OTHERS...ALSO AWAITING JUDGMENT!

DRAKOS...DENIZEN OF THE DEATH WORLD; EPIPHANY OF ABSOLUTE EVIL...LEADS THE BEWILDERED HAG TO HER CAGE...ONE IN THE MIDST OF THOUSANDS STACKED MILE HIGH LIKE SO MANY CARTONS IN A WAREHOUSE! THE EAR-PIERCING SHRIEKS AND CRIES OF HER FELLOWS DEAFENS HER...AND HER MISERY OVERTAKES THE NOW Sudden REALIZATION OF THE REALITY OF DEATH!

MADAM...ENTER YOUR CASE...THEN AWAIT YOUR CALL BY THE MASTER!

YOU CAN'T PUT ME IN THERE...IT'S UNIMAGINABLE!

SIT IN THERE...YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN ACCORDED UNPRECEDENTED PRIVILEGES...SO JUST TO GET IN THERE AND SHUT UP!

BUT DO NOT FOOL YOURSELF! YOU ARE DEAD!

LIKE THE INFAMOUS INSTRUMENT OF MEDIEVAL TORTURE, THIS UPDATED SPICE BOX SERVES ITS MASTER FAR BETTER THAN ITS PREDECESSOR...FOR THIS COFFIN IS CUSHIONED FROM EVERY ANGLE BY DEEP AND BITING FOUR-INCH SPIKES--IF DESIGNED TO TORTURE THE LIVING DEAD...THOSE WHO CANNOT PRAY FOR DEATH...THOSE WHO CAN ONLY WAIT...AND ENDURE...THE ETERNAL AGONY!

TIME PASSES...SLOWLY...TEARS NOW FESTER,  
SCARS IN THE OPEN CUTS IN HER FLESH...  
TIME HAS NO MEANING, NO SUBSTANCE...THEN  
SHE IS PAID A VISIT...

WELL, WOMAN...THE TIME HAS FINALLY  
COME FOR YOUR...AUDIENCE!



SO CONFINED HAS SHE BEEN, SO RESTRICTED IN MOVEMENT TO  
ONLY AN INCH HERE...AN INCH THERE...THAT SHE CAN SCARCELY  
MOVE! HER BONES HAVE MOLEDED INTO A FIXED POSITION, HER  
LIMBS WILL HARDLY MOVE...AND SO HER NEW FOUND FREEDOM IS  
NOT A BLESSING...BUT A NIGHTMARE!

COME QUICKLY...DON'T STUMBLE  
THE MASTER ANXIETY...AND HIS  
TIME IS VALUABLE! IF WE ARE  
NOT PROMPT WE WILL BOTH  
SUFFER HIS WRATH!

HERE SHE IS...MASTER!  
THE NEWEST ACQUISITION.  
HER NAME IS MULAN  
DU SADE

WELCOME...WELCOME!  
HAS DRACOKOS SHOWN YOU  
OUR CHAMBER, YET...HAVE  
YOU DECIDED WHAT YOU  
WANT?

I'VE BEEN SHOWN  
NOTHING...I KNOW  
NOTHING ABOUT A...  
CHAMBER...

AH WELL THEN...YOU  
HAVE A SURPRISE IN  
STORE FOR YOU...NOT  
A PLEASANT ONE I  
REGRET...BUT  
NEVERTHELESS A  
GENUINE FIRST  
RATE SURPRISE...

BUT MARY RESIDENT HAS A  
PRIVATE HELL THE THING  
ONE FEARS MOST...

WITH MARY IT IS QUITE COMMON...  
RATS, SNAKES, EVEN SPIDERS...  
THINGS OF THAT SORT; BUT WITH  
SOME...THE BRAND OF PUNISHMENT  
IS UNIQUE!

COME...  
I'LL SHOW  
YOU...

SORRY FOR ALL THESE DRAMATICS...THE CASTLE WALLS, THE OLD DANCE POOR...

BUT OUR...RESIDENTS TAKE THIS ATMOSPHERE...MAKES DEATH AND HELL SEEM QUITE COMPLETE!

THIS MAN IN LIFE WAS AN ARSONIST! HE WENT AROUND SETTING FIRE TO BUILDINGS, ANIMALS-EVEN PEOPLE--NOW HE'S GETTING HIS JUST REWARDS HERE IN HELL FROM THESE FLAME-TONGUED INSECTS WHO Gobble HIS FLESH!

EVERY SO OFTEN THE ROPES BREAKING ON THAT ROPE BREAK THROUGH AND THAT WRETCHED WOMAN SUDDENLY HAS STABBING PAINS IN THE HEART...

...BUT IT HEALS UP QUICKLY--SPIRITUAL SOULS ALL HEAL QUICKLY--READY FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TORTURES!

IN LIFE THAT FELLOW WAS A PRACTICAL JOKER... HE WENT AROUND PLAYING FIENDISH PRANKS ON HIS FRIENDS...ONE BACKFIRED AND HIS BEST FRIEND DIED!

WORRIED IS IT? HA-HA! WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO JOIN HIM?

NO! NO! PLEASE...IN HEAVEN'S NAME NO... PLEASE...

YOU'LL PAY THE SUPREME PUNISHMENT...FOR EVEN MENTIONING THAT OTHER PLACE!

HIS PUNISHMENT DOESN'T END WITH THE MANHAWK'S MOAN; FOR HERE HE THINKS ALL THOSE WRITHING HANDS AND TWITCHING FINGERS ARE HIS FRIENDS SEEKING THEIR RETRIBUTION!



AND SO SHE IS LEFT ALONE... BUT TO ENDURE THE MOST INHUMAN PUNISHMENT OF ALL... LONELINESS AND THE BURDEN OF THE MIND!

LEFT TO ROT, HE SAID... IN THIS MISERABLE HOLE IN THE GROUND SPRAWLED OF THE DAMNATION OF SOLITUDE...TILL GO INSANE!



SHE DOES NOT SEE THE EYES WATCHING LIKE A SILENT DEMON IN THE DARKNESS! EYES THAT ARE CRUEL AND WITHOUT A HUMAN SHRED OF EMOTION.



CAN IT REALLY BE THAT THE DEVIL HIMSELF CAN BE THWARTED? THAT SATAN IS A FOOL...THAT HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IS IN LIASON WITH THE FORCES OF... GOOD?



AT LAKE AVERNOUS, IN ITALY IS A CRATER  
LAKED JOINED TO THE UNDERGROUND  
#TYPHON CREEK AN INSURMOUNTABLE  
BARRIER TO THOSE WHO WOULD ENTER  
...BUT NOT TO THOSE WHO WOULD  
LEAVE.

I WILL GIVE YOU  
DIRECTIONS TO REACH  
IT FROM HERE... BUT TO  
BE RE-UNITED WITH  
YOUR EARTH BODY... TO  
BECOME AS ONE AGAIN  
IN THE WORLD OF PHYSICAL  
BEINGS... YOU MUST KNOW  
THE UNHOLY  
INCANTATION!

ON THE SURFACE  
YOU MUST STAY  
'SATAN...MASTER  
OF NONE...SCOURGE  
TO NO ONE... BUT  
HIMSELF... I HAVE  
BECOME FREED IN  
SOUL AND SPIRIT  
...I DEMAND THE  
RESTITUTION OF  
LIFE! THEN YOU  
WILL BECOME  
ONE!

MOST WISE ACCURATE IN HIS PREDICTION OF HER ROUTE... IT WOULD TAKE HER DAYS OF TIRING TRAVEL... OF ENDLESS JOURNEY! BUT IT WAS WORTH IT... IT WAS FREEDOM!



THE SPIRITUAL BODY NEEDS NO NOURISHMENT... NO FOOD OR DRINK TO KEEP IT ALIVE... BUT EVEN SO THERE IS MORTAL SUFFERING IN THE AGONIZING ENDLESS STRUGGLE FOR THE PURIFICATION OF SUTEKH... THE TOAD HAS RUMPS INTO THE MONSTROUS EATS AGAIN WHO SEEK AFTER RAW FLESH AND COLD UNLIVING BLOOD...

AT LAST... THE LAST BARRIER... THE  
RIVER STYX... IF I CAN MAKE IT  
ACROSS WITHOUT BEING TRAPPED  
IN THE EVER ENCLAWING MARSH  
STORM I'LL REACH THE  
SURFACE...



AND SO IT APPEARS THAT SATAN AS A FOOL... TO BE TRICKED SO EASILY BY ONE OF HIS CHARGES! THE FOOL HAS REACHED THE EARTH'S SURFACE... HAS ESCAPED FROM THE VERY CORE OF THE EARTH ITSELF... AND FROM THE NOW SCOURING SATAN AS SHE UTTERS THE WORDS THAT FORCES THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS TO PEST HER FROM HIS HOLD ON HER.



AND SATAN  
GROWS HORRIBLE  
A GHASTLY SMILE  
FOR HIS WORK  
IS DONE... HIS  
EVIL HAS TAKEN  
ROOT AND FORMED  
INTO THE GROTESQUE  
SEMI-LIFE THAT  
ROTS IN THE  
EARTH-BOUND  
MENTAL ASYLUM,  
KNOWN AS BEDLAM!



"I WARNED HER,  
HER CARCASS  
WOULD ROT UNTIL  
IT SMELLED LIKE  
MAGNET SATAN  
DREW DEEP A  
BREATH OF  
SATISFACTION. 'SHE  
DON'T BELIEVE  
ME, DIP SHE VOGT...  
THAT EVERYONE  
HAS THEIR OWN  
PECCULAR BRAND  
OF PRIVATE HELL!'"



"THEY NEVER BELIEVE  
ME!" "AYE MASTER,"  
SPIT THE HIDEOUS  
DWARF TRAITOR, AND  
VOGT HAS AGAIN  
SERVED YOU WELL...  
LETTING YOU THINK  
SHE WAS ESCAPING  
TO FREEDOM AND  
UNITY WITH HER  
BODY!"



"SHE THINKS SHE IS  
INNOCENT? HUH...  
INDIRECT... AND ONE  
IS INNOCENT, VOGT...  
NO ONE! AND SO  
SHE SHALL SUFFER  
IN HER OWN HELL...  
THE HELL ON EARTH  
SHE CHOSE HERSELF...  
FOR HAD SHE NOT BEEN  
SO INCREDIBLY  
STUPID, SHE WOULD  
HAVE REMEMBERED  
THAT HER BODY  
COULD NOT HAVE  
BEEN RE-UNITED  
WITH HER HEAD...  
THAT THE CHOPPED  
HEADS ARE CHOPPED  
UP... AND USED AS  
DOG MEAT!"



**THE END.**

AND SATAN, BOWING LOW HIS GRAY DISSEMBLANCE, DISAPPEARED. THE TOAD HAD LIVED... FOR EVEN AS SATAN HAD HIS VILE BEDLAM AFTER THE GURVE... WE ON EARTH-SIDE HAVE OUR OWN  
BEDLAM... THE ASYLUM FOR THE INCURABLY **INSANE**, AND IS THERE MAN ALIVE WHO WOULD  
DARE TO QUESTION THAT THE NOTORIOUS TOAD HAD OF PARIS DU COMITE REFORME IS DURABLE... FOR  
THE WRETCHED SPOT CHAINED TO BEDLAM IS HEADLESS... AND DECAPITATION IS INCURABLE!

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# 'ALIVING DEATH!'





I DON'T GET IT, SAM! LAUREN'S BEEN DEAD FOR THREE DAYS NOW... AND YOU STILL WON'T TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO HER!



SHE NEVER HAD A SICK DAY IN HER LIFE, SAM! WHY DID SHE DIE?

STILL, THE AUTOPSY SHOWED THAT SHE DIED OF...

...ACUTE ANEMIA!

ALL RIGHT, YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH... SO I'LL TELL YOU, EVEN THOUGH IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!

SHE HAD A CHECKUP A MONTH AGO AND WAS FINE! SHE WAS THE PICTURE OF HEALTH!

AND WITH HER ARRIVAL, WE WILL BE READY FOR THE MOMENT WE HAVE SO LONG AWAITED!

THIS IS THE THIRD NIGHT, WOMAN OF MY LIFE! YOU KNOW BY NOW THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT!

IN JUST TWO MORE MINUTES, WE WILL BE JOINED BY ANOTHER FOLLOWER!

SHORTLY AFTER SHE WALKS THROUGH THE DOORWAY... WE SHALL NEVER REMEMBER AGAIN!

NOW, THE MOMENT OF RECKONING IS UPON US! WITH THE ADDITION OF ONE FINAL FOLLOWER...

WELCOME, LAUREN! WELCOME TO LIFE THAT WILL NEVER END!

YOU CALLED ME, MASTER, AS YOU PROMISED... AND I HAVE COME!

CREEAK

...OUR DESTINY SHALL AT LAST BE FULFILLED!

SO IF YOU'RE SO CERTAIN THAT DEREK HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH LAUREN'S DEATH... WHY DON'T YOU HAVE HIM ARRESTED?

BUT YOU'RE A POLICEMAN! SURELY THEY'D TRUST YOUR INTUITION!

OH, SEE WHIZ, I'M SORRY, CAM! I'M BEING NAIVE!

BECAUSE I HAVE NO PROOF! THEY'D LAUGH ME OUT OF THE PRECINCT!

...BUT I HAVE ANOTHER IDEA! WHAT IF I TRY TO GET SOME INFORMATION FOR YOU? WHAT IF I TRY TO DATE THIS DEREK CHARACTER?

UNLESS YOU THINK, MAYBE, I'M NOT SEXY ENOUGH TO ATTRACT HIM.

I'LL ACCEPT THAT, SAM! BUT WHAT DO YOU SAY WE FORGET IT FOR NOW?

YOU'RE WORKING TOMORROW NIGHT, SO I'LL GO DOWN TO THE PLACE WHERE LAUREN MET HIM AND SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING!

YOU KNOW BETTER THAN THAT! BUT I COULDN'T LET YOU TAKE THE ARMS!

MAYBE I CAN LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT HIM... AND WITH THAT SETTLED, MAYBE NOW YOU CAN CONCENTRATE ON LEARNING SOMETHING ABOUT ME!

BESIDES, I'M PROBABLY JUST BEING RIDICULOUS ABOUT THE WHOLE THING, EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T HELP FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING TERRIBLY EWL ABOUT THAT MAN!



NOW... ALL OF YOU KNOW WHAT MUST BE DONE... AND WHY! SO GO FORWARD WITH MY BLESSINGS!

...AND DO AS YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD FOR THE GOOD OF OUR FAMILY!

IF YOU DO YOUR TASK, WHILE YOU WILL BE REWARDED WITH LIFE EVERLASTING!

SO THINK NOT OF WHAT YOU MUST DO, BUT OF THE END RESULT; IT WILL BRING YOU!

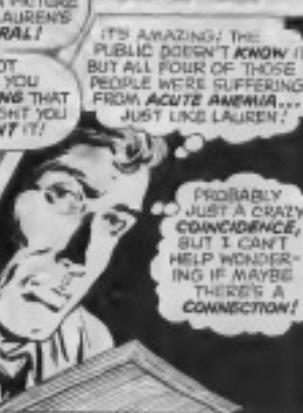
GO! AND DO NOT DARE RETURN TO ME EMPTYHANDED!







I SHOT  
IT WHILE YOU  
WERE CHASING THAT  
GUY. I THOUGHT YOU  
MIGHT WANT IT!



I MUST BE LOSING MY MIND!  
STILL, I CAN'T TAKE THE CHANCE!

I'VE ALREADY LOST LAUREN AND I CAN'T AFFORD TO RISK LOSING SANDY AS WELL!

THINGS LIKE THIS AREN'T POSSIBLE! THEY ONLY HAPPEN IN BOOKS!

THAT HAS TO BE THE ANSWER! MAD AS IT SEEMS I CAN'T BELIEVE ANYTHING ELSE!

STILL, THE EVIDENCE ADDS UP! HE DID IT TO LAUREN, AND HE DID IT TO THE SENATORS AND THEIR WIVES!

YOU KNOW BABY, I'M REALLY DIGGING THE FACT THAT I GOT TOGETHER WITH YOU TONIGHT!

YOU'RE A GROOVY CHICK, AND I THINK WE CAN MAKE IT IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

I FOLLOW YOU, DEREK, BUT I'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU!

LATER, BABY,  
LATER! RIGHT NOW  
THERE'S JUST YOU  
AND ME!

THIS IS A HAPPENING FOR BOTH OF US!

THEN WE CAN GET ON TO THE HEAVY THINGS LATER! DAD?

....I DIG, DEREK!

DEREK WILLIAMSON? SURE, HE SPUN FROM HERE A FEW MINUTES AGO WITH A CHICK!

WELL, WHAT DID SHE LOOK LIKE, MAN?

MAN, HE DIDN'T SEEM LIKE MOST OF THE OTHERS!

A FINE FOX, DADDY!  
NEVER SAW HER AROUND HERE BEFORE,  
BUT THEN DEREK ALWAYS GETS ALL OF THE NEW STUFF!

YEAH, HE WAS REALLY UPTIGHT! I COULD ALMOST DIG THE MAN...

...IF HE WASN'T ONE OF THEM! NOW COME ON AND LET'S GET BACK TO THE ACTION! YOU THINK HE'D STAND AROUND ON THE SIDEWALK WORRYING ABOUT US IF SOMEBODY'D MADE OFF WITH OUR OLD LADY?



I...I'LL DO WHAT-  
EVER YOU SAY,  
DEREK!

NOTHING  
CAN STOP  
US NOW!

I KNOW,  
I KNOW!

I GOT YOUR  
NUMBER, DEREK!  
I STILL DON'T  
BELIEVE IT,  
BUT IT SEEMS  
TO BE  
HAPPENING  
ANYWAY!

IN A FEW  
MOMENTS, YOU  
WILL BE MINE  
FOREVER!

YES, DEREK...  
FOREVER!

NO!  
NOOOOO!  
TAKE IT  
AWAY! I  
HATE YOU!  
TAKE IT  
AWAY!

YOU KILLED  
MY SISTER...AND  
NOW YOU WERE  
ABOUT TO DO  
THE SAME TO  
MY FIANCÉ!

BUT IN AN AGE  
WHEN NO ONE  
BELIEVES IN OLD  
SUPERSTITIONS ANY  
MORE...YOU'VE MADE  
A BELIEVER OF ME!

NOW...  
YOU'RE GOING  
TO DIE...

No...No...No

DIE...DIE...  
DIE...DIE...

VAMPIRE

IT'S ALL OVER,  
DARLING? IT SEEMS  
LIKE A NIGHTMARE,  
BUT WE BOTH KNOW  
IT WAS REAL!

BUT ALL THAT  
MATTERS IS  
THAT IT HAS  
ENDED!

HAD IT.  
GONE? I'M SO  
FRIGHTENED!

YOU'VE KILLED HIM, BUT WHAT IF HE HAD...OTHERS?  
WHAT IF...IF LAWRENCE WAS TURNED INTO A VAMPIRE...  
ALONG WITH GOD KNOWS HOW MANY OTHERS?

I DON'T HAVE AN ANSWER TO THAT  
QUESTION, SANDY...AND I CERTAINLY  
CAN'T TELL THE AUTHORITIES ANYTHING  
ABOUT THIS! THEY'D THINK I WAS INSANE!

WE CAN ONLY  
PRAY HE WAS THE  
ONLY ONE OF HIS KIND.  
IF THERE ARE MORE  
OF THEM...MAY GOD  
HELP US!

END

IN A COLD STONE TOWER, OF HIS TOWN HOME IN RENAISSANCE FLORENCE -- CRISTOFORO ORSINO PERFORMS A PEANIFICAL INVOCATION -- HOPING IN HIS DESPAIR TO BRING THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, THAT LEGENDARY LORD OF TARTARUS, OUT OF THOSE HELLFIRES WHICH ARE HIS FIERY HOME! FOR CRISTOFORO ORSINO HAS NEED OF THE GENTLEMAN FROM GEMMARA! IF THE DEVIL CANNOT HELP HIM -- HE WILL BECOME A VICTIM OF HIS HALF-MAD RULER! YET IF HE DOES AS THE DEVIL SAYS, HE WILL FALL VICTIM TO HIS OWN HATE!

# The Horror on the Chapel Wall



A THUNDEROUS KNOCKING SHAKES THE VERY WALLS OF THE PIAZZA, DRAWING OUT THE YOUTHFUL ARTIST'S WORDS...

LOW LAUGHTER FILLS THE NECROMANTIC CHAMBER...



HIS VOICE SHAKES WITH THE HATE INSIDE HIM AS CROSTORFORD GRINS STRETCHES OUT A BEFEECHING HAND...



NEXT MOMENT, IN A BURST OF FLAME AND SMOKE, THE NOBGOB VANISHES FROM VIEW...



NEXT MOMENT THE STREET DOOR CRASHES FROM ITS HINGES...



STRONG HANDS GRIP THE WRISTS OF THE YOUTHFUL ARTIST...



THE POUNDING HOOFES OF GALLOPPING HORSES AND THE RATTLING WHEELS OF A BLACK COACH SHOW WHERE ONE MORE VICTIM OF THE HALF-MAD DUKE IS BEING CARRIED TO FACE A DREADFUL FATE...



GRIM DUKE LEOPOLD AWAITED THE MAN HE HATES



NO MATTER! DARING, YOU ARE HERE! AND THERE IS SOMETHING I WOULD SHOW YOU!



A HAND THROWS OPEN THE DOOR TO AN UPSTAIRS BEDROOM...

LOOK THERE,  
CRISTOFORD ORSHNO--  
AND THEN TELL ME I  
SHOULD NOT HAVE YOU  
TORTURED TO  
DEATH!

LOOK,  
MAN--  
LOOK!



ISABELLA!!



YOU DID THIS!  
YOU MURDERED  
THE WOMAN I  
LOVE!

FOR THIS,  
I WILL HAVE  
REVENGE!



FOOL! SHE  
STARRED  
HERSelf...  
MEWLING OUT  
THAT SHE LOVED  
ONLY YOU AND  
WOULD HAVE  
NONE BUT  
YOU TOUCH  
HER!



SHE ALSO SAID--BEFORE  
SHE STARRED HERSELF  
--THAT SHE WOULD WAIT  
FOR YOU BEYOND  
THE GRAVE!



I AM A SENSITIVE MAN,  
ORSINO. I HATE YOU--  
BUT MY HATE MUST NOT  
DICTATE MY DUCAL  
FEELINGS.



I WANT TO REUNITE YOU AND YOUR  
LOVING ISABELLA IN DEATH, BUT...I  
CANNOT CONDEMN YOU TO DEATH  
UNLESS YOU COMMIT A CRIME!



SO I HAVE  
DECIDED TO GIVE  
YOU A TASK  
THAT IS  
IMPOSSIBLE  
TO PERFORM!  
BY TRYING TO  
DO WHAT YOUR  
DUKE HAS  
ORDERED--



YOU SHALL  
SIGN YOUR OWN  
DEATH WARRANT!



IN A BARE CHAPEL IN THE  
DUCAL PALACE MINUTES LATER...



YOU SHALL COVER THESE  
WALLS WITH HOLY SCENES...  
BEFORE DAWN LIGHT!



SUCCESS--  
AND WALK OUT  
OF HERB A  
FREE MAN!



FAIL! AND  
YOU DIE BY  
TORTURE!



CRISTOFORD ORSHNO FACES AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, INDEED.

LEFT ALONE--DESPAIRING AND BEYOND HOPE--  
THE YOUNG ARTIST BEGINS HIS TITANIC TASK...

THE LIGHT IS BAD...THE PAINTS ARE WATERY,  
WHICH MEANS THEY KEEP RUNNING!

I CAN NEVER  
GET THIS PAINTING  
DONE.

BUT THEN THE DUKE  
KNEW THIS WHEN HE  
ASSIGNED THE TASK  
TO ME!

AND THEN AT THE WITCHING HOUR OF MIDNIGHT...

BE CHEERFUL, CRISTOFORO!  
DID I NOT PROMISE TO  
HELP YOU GAIN YOUR  
VENGEANCE?

GIVE OVER TO  
MY ARTISTIC  
SKILLS, NOW!



NOW BEGINS A NIGHT OF MINGLED HORROR AND  
PRIMAL TERROR, FOR CRISTOFORO ORSINI...

THAT IS NO  
MOLY SCENE  
WE DRAW!

INDEED  
NOT!

WHAT HAVE  
I TO DO WITH  
HOLY THINGS?



I DRAW THE FORGOTTEN DAYS WHEN EARTH WAS  
YOUNG, WHEN PEOPLE WORSHIPPED ME AS PAM...  
AS DIAOUSUS...AS APIS OF EGYPT; HERE THERE  
WAS LOVE AND LAUGHTER, DAY AND NIGHT...

HERE, LET ME  
PAINT ISABELLA INTO  
MY PICTURE!



WHAT ELSE ARE YOU  
PUTTING IN THE PICTURE?

WHAT IS THAT  
MONSTROUS--  
SOMETHING--HALF  
HIDDEN IN THE  
LEAVES AND  
SHADOWS?

MY  
BELOVED!

SHALL I PAINT  
YOU IN ALSO, CRISTOFORO?  
BENOÎT, THEN!



POUNDING PAGES FROM VIEW AND THEN, WHEN THE FIRST RED SHAFTS OF MORNING SUNLIGHT TINT THE CHAPEL WINDOWS...



AT MIDNIGHT--IN  
THE COLD STONE  
DUNGEONS...



AT MIDNIGHT--IN THE PAINTED CHAPEL...



ON DEMONIC FEET THE AWESOME  
SOMETHING STEPS ACROSS THE  
CHAPEL FLOOR...



A FEARSON GUSTET BENDS THE WOODEN DOOR...



IN HIS LOFTY TOWER DOOR, DUKE  
LEOPOLD HEARS A STRANGE AND  
ERIE SNIFFING...





THE POOR FOUNDS--CRASHES SOULFULLY MOANS AND FALLS INWARD ACROSS THE FLOOR, LEAPS AN UNFORGETTABLE ABOMINATION...



THE DUKE DROPS--WHILE Gaping MOUTHS DRIVE FOR HIS THROAT...



IN THAT LAST MOMENT-- BEFORE RAPACIOUS RANGS FLASH INTO HIS THROAT, DUKE LEOPOLD SEEKS...



LEISURELY THE BEHEMOTH FEASTS—FOR ALL  
THE PALACE SLEEPS, UNDER A SPELL...

MORNING SUNLIGHT CASTS ITS  
OCHRE BRUSH...

BUT AT RIVERY  
MIDNIGHT—ON THE  
DUSTY CHAPEL WALL,  
THE MONSTER FEASTS  
AGAIN—AND AGAIN  
AND AGAIN! AND  
ALWAYS AT THAT  
DREAD HOUR, THE  
SHRIEKS OF THE  
BATTEN-ALIVE DUKE  
LEOPOLD ONCE MORE  
RING THROUGHOUT  
HIS LONG-ABANDONED  
PALACE...



# NIGHTMARE'S NIGHTMAIL

I have to say that the 'Inner Man' story which appeared in April Nightmare was one of the best ever done. This tale of a man going through the system of another human being was not only dramatically written, but the story telling was superb. I wouldn't mind seeing them make a movie out of it.

George Keyser  
Brooklyn, N.Y.



Nightmare may well be on the way in providing some good competition for the Warren Magazines. However I would suggest that in order to do so that you get more artists on the level of Tom Palmer who did one of your stories. Your other artists like David Hadley and some of the others have no conception of how to render a horror mood. I do hope that you will be using men like Dan Adkins, Bill Graham, Tom Sutton, Grey Morrow and others of their quality. With them I have no doubts for your success.

Steven Boven  
San Francisco, Calif.

Palmer's work was alright but you need more people like him. Personally I don't like your other artists and second I never heard of them. I definitely think you have to get different artists.

Paul Trope  
Trenton, N.J.

I have been reading all kinds of Horror magazines for many years, and I particularly liked the Nightmare issue which featured the Neanderthal man on the cover. (Done by the fellow that signs it Boris.) Actually, I was disappointed in the feature story when The Dawn Gods War. I thought the possibilities were good, but the art was kind of weak. 'Rotten Deal' by Philip Rowland was very well done, as was the rest of the issue. Oh well, nobody really bats a thousand.

Jack Quinn  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Your magazine has more guts to the ounce than anything else I've ever seen. What kind of weirdos do you have working up there. I'd like to meet those editors Waldman and Brodsky and see what's making these cats tick. I had to take two Brimos after reading your book that's how sick I was. Those Warren books are nursery rhymes compared to your stuff. Those fiction pieces are out of sight, whoever that Art Stampier is, he sure has a strange mind. Keep him going he's weird really weird. Keep up the great work!

John Biffon  
Sioux City, Iowa

Your Pollution Monster cover couldn't have been more in tune with today. Your magazine was the first of its kind to devote a cover so matter so crucial. It makes us aware of the fact that horror is something terribly real. It would be wonderful if your magazine could continue this trend of real horror. It's an interesting change of pace from the usual fictional stuff. The inside of the magazine could use some improvements especially in your selection of artists but, I am sure those changes will come with time.

Robert Miller  
Syracuse, N.Y.

Nightmare is a fine addition to the horror magazines. I've just picked up a copy and I was very impressed with it. The cover is sensational and reminds me of the covers of the old pulp magazines. Keep that style up I really like it. That pollution story was something very unusual for a horror magazine and I thought it very interesting to find something so vital in your magazine.

Barry Fields  
Miami Beach

I've just read Nightmare #1. It's not bad but it's far from being good. The cover was good, was it done by Mike Esposito? Please tell your artists not to use too much gray wash in their work, it ruins it. A really good piece of art was THE MARK OF THE BEAST done by one of my favorites, Tom Palmer. Keep him busy with work. I hope you keep on publishing Nightmare a long time, after the Warren publications you come next. One more word about the artists, try to get some good ones like Wally Wood and Dan Adkins. Try to bring out some Canadian ones too. I'd like that very much. Waiting for #2 (and PSYCHO).

Richard Charron  
Canada

I enjoy your magazines, BUT . . . I have a problem buying them. No, it's not because they're sold out, but I just can't seem to find them at any of the dealers in the Miami, Fla., area. The copies I get are sent to me by my cousin who knows I am a fan of this type mag. Hope you can resolve this.

C. Fink  
Miami, Fla.

Next issue we will be answering your letters, so keep them coming in. Address all mail to:  
NIGHTMARE'S NIGHTMAIL  
18 East 41 St. Rm 1501  
New York City, N.Y. 10017.

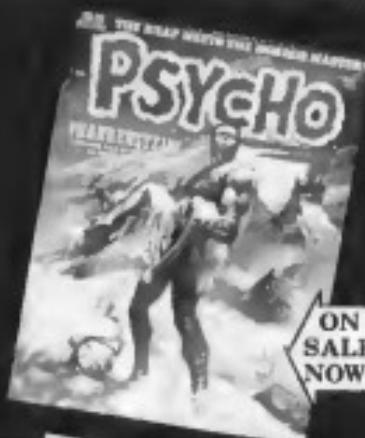
Wait'll you see what

# PSYCHO

(May issue)

has in store for you!

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(May issue)

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and action-packed  
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To read it is to enjoy it!



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NOW!

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